

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the HOPE *worldwide* UK staff and trustees, we want to apologise for the delay in the release of this statement regarding two concerns that have been raised with HOPE *worldwide* UK. This delay has occurred because we have taken time to consult with staff, trustees and our partners in the Ukraine relief efforts.

Firstly, it saddens us to see and hear of the racism faced by people of colour in Ukraine and the neighbouring countries. It is disheartening to know that people of colour have been prevented from leaving Ukraine, and have experienced deprivation of food and shelter, beatings and various forms of discrimination.

HOPE *worldwide* UK opposes and does not condone any form of unlawful and unfair discrimination, in line with Romans 2:11: 'For God does not show favouritism'. HOPE *worldwide* UK is firmly committed to offer support to all those in need without discrimination. This means that we do not discriminate based on gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, age, nationality, national origin, sexuality, religion or belief, marital status and social class.

Secondly, there have also been questions raised regarding the difference in our response to Ukrainian refugees in comparison to other crises, e.g., those in Syria and Afghanistan, and the reasons for this. The UK Government scheme for Ukrainian refugees (Homes for Ukraine) is reliant on accommodation in the homes of volunteers. This scheme did not exist for other refugees experiencing humanitarian crises. However, many of our Two Step beneficiaries are also refugees who are experiencing homelessness, and are not part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme. We have combined our experience with using volunteer homes for our Two Step programme with our knowledge of working with refugees via Two Step to help us house Ukrainian refugees through the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

While the Homes for Ukraine scheme limits the way HOPE *worldwide* UK can respond and help, we have had the privilege of working with local organisations and the Refugee Council – who send us referrals of refugees in need – and Housing Justice, who have provided helpful information that we share with our hosts. Our support also includes connecting refugees with local free resources, such as free language classes, helping them register with their local council, and referring them to Ukrainian hubs where refugees can be provided with clothing and other essentials.

HOPE *worldwide* UK appreciates those who have highlighted our response to the Government's approach in creating different systems for refugees. This has opened up conversations within the organisation on how we can best help all those in need and better support refugees from all over the world. In this instance, we believe that goal is best served by creating a dialogue with our funders and donors to see how we can collaborate with other refugee charities that support refugees' needs.

If you have knowledge or experience related to refugee charities and projects, please contact Jane Whitworth, Director of International Development, at jane.whitworth@hopeworldwide.org.uk, so you can be part of that dialogue.

As a learning organisation, we continue to welcome your feedback, which helps us to consider and find ways to improve HOPE *worldwide* UK's response to humanitarian crises – both at home and abroad.

Kind regards,

Michael Farrell

(CEO of HOPE *worldwide* UK)